

DRAFT¹
SWAC Beyond Waste Subcommittee Meeting #2 Notes
June 5, 2003

The second meeting of the SWAC Beyond Waste Subcommittee Process convened at 9:00 a.m. in Seattle, Washington. Attending the meeting were: Chris Chapman, Marc Daudon, Dennis Durbin, Gene Eckhardt, Dan Gee, Lorie Hewitt, Jeff Kelley-Clarke, Lynn Helbrecht, Brad Lovaas, Josh Marx, Lyn Barker, Nancy Mears, Suellen Mele, Jerry Smedes, Cheryl Smith, Cullen Stephenson, Damon Taam, David Stitzhal, Sally Toteff, and Holly Wescott. Dee Endelman facilitated the meeting and Eli Asher took notes.

Desired Outcomes

The desired outcomes of this meeting included: input from the participants on three initiatives: Green Building, Organics, and Industrial Waste; and introduction of the final two initiatives: Moderate Risk Waste and Performance Indicators.

After a round of introductions, the facilitator reviewed the outcomes from the first meeting. The purpose of the first meeting had been to present the first three Beyond Waste initiatives, as well as the Materials Flow Framework, established by Ecology's consultants as the foundation for thinking about Beyond Waste initiatives.

Green Building Initiative

In order to promote participation in the large group discussion, the group was divided into small groups to briefly discuss the Green Building Initiative. The small groups were loosely based on stakeholder groups: business, local government, etc. The small group discussions were not memorialized with formal notes. They were asked to discuss both the positive aspects of the initiative as well as areas of concern.

The full group reconvened to discuss the Green Building Initiative. Individual group members listed the following positive aspects of the initiative:

- Its long-term nature
- Inclusion of tax incentives
- Government "walking the talk" with LEED certification and environmentally preferable purchasing requirements
- Consideration of toxins in building materials
- Its benefits to public health
- Public and private sector implications
- Specific targets and goals
- Compatibility with Governor Locke's sustainability program
- The sweep of activities included (water usage, heating & cooling)

¹ Finalized notes will include the attachments referred to in this document.

- The possibility of decreasing illegal dumping due to increased market value of excess materials
- Supports entrepreneurship in recycling and reuse field

Participants listed the following concerns:

- Potential costs of implementation in both public and private sectors
- Not obvious why this initiative was selected: what is the solid waste-related rationale?
- The ability to implement due to tight state budget
- The perception that Green Building is inordinately expensive
- Disposal bans could result in an increase in illegal dumping
- Increased initial cost of building might hinder understanding of long-term savings to be obtained by Green Building
- Small rural contractors will not be able to compete in a new market created around Green Building
- Illicit trash hauling in the guise of recycling is already an issue; a green building mandate might worsen the problem
- Additional infrastructure would be needed to deal with the recycling aspects of home remodeling
- Deconstruction is difficult to do

Participants also provided the following suggestions to strengthen the initiative:

- Find ways to determine the “hard numbers” that will quantify the costs/benefits of Green Building
- Need for education
- Need more numeric targets
- Provide tax incentives
- Start an investment fund to use if Green Building costs more
- Bid specifications that incorporate Green Building principles are important
- Look at role of insurance (better rates for Green-built?)
- Need legislation to move this along
- Add to strategy: certifying state-owned forest lands
- Add a much stronger renewable energy system
- Develop consumer information stickers for Green-built houses, detailing information such as projected energy savings
- Some participants talked about product stewardship for items such as carpet, fluorescent lights, thermostats, and paint as a key to the success of Green Building (through the reclaiming of materials by manufacturers at the end of their life, as well as the resulting Green design). Other participants voiced

- concern for the potentially high costs to manufacturers and the limited ability to regulate this outside of Washington
- Some participants talked about the need for buyers to match the size of the house they purchase to their needs.

The group brainstormed a list of potential partners for the Green Building Initiative:

- Cascadia Consulting
- Green Building Council
- AIA -Seattle Chapter (Committee on Environment)
- Northwest Eco Building Guild
- Rebar
- Master Builder Association
- Local governments
- Banks
- Washington State Investment Fund
- Other states that are working on similar projects
- Home improvement warehouses (e.g. Home Depot, Lowes)
- Local building officials and appraisers
- AGC
- Deconstruction sector
- The ReStore
- Insurance companies
- Interior Design Association

Organics Initiative

Before providing input to this initiative, participants asked clarifying questions, including where the reduction in waste would come from, and how organic waste was defined. Marc Daudon explained that the consulting team had focused mostly on reduction of food handling waste in homes and restaurants, although the initiative includes other forms of organic waste. In response to the question of how organic waste was defined for the initiative, Ecology staff responded that for the purpose of the initiative, organic waste is defined as compostable waste. It does not include all carbon-chain materials.

Participants voiced the following positive aspects to the initiative:

- Its vision
- Addressing food wastes
- Great potential benefits to soil and water health
- Its reference to the establishment of “best management practices”

- Opportunity to link with greenhouse gas issues
- The inclusion of a Pilot project
- Yard waste collection infrastructure could be modified to accommodate food waste
- The potential for diverting a large volume of material from the waste stream

Participants listed the following concerns:

- Hazardous waste organics such as oil and antifreeze are not addressed
- Initiative does not address energy expenditure in collection and processing, as well as resulting effects on air and water quality
- Initiative does not address soil health
- Not enough emphasis on on-site management (e.g. restaurants, landscaping projects)
- Substantial cost issues for municipalities, small businesses, individuals
- Food waste is a major source of revenue for landfills and transfer stations that would be reduced by increased composting
- Market may not support a huge increase in recycled fertilizers
- Recycled food waste is problematic due to the potentially high rate of contamination
- Statewide mandates will not work equally well for all sizes of municipalities
- Further analysis on desirable compost products is needed
- Mandatory source separation may cause problems with haulers who are moving toward single-stream systems
- Disposal bans could increase illegal dumping
- Concern about siting facilities in neighborhoods
- Could mean new systems (more trucks, more energy, more resources)
- Revenue loss from significant reductions in this waste stream

Participants made the following suggestions to strengthen the Initiative:

- Initiative needs to outline benefits for soil and water health to make it more palatable for the community
- Composting would look more attractive if the state could put a dollar figure on the amount of methane produced in landfills without composting; correlation between increased composting and reduction in greenhouse gasses must be emphasized
- A “road map” would be helpful to illustrate the Initiative; the private sector needs to know what to buy and when to buy it in order to invest in this process (include a map of current facilities and their potential).
- Initiative needs more specific numbers and processes: identify sources of waste, sources of funding, links between goals and steps, etc.

- Should include ongoing way to monitor new materials that come into contact with humans
- Market development is critical-make this begin earlier
- Energy generation should be considered as an option for non-compostable organic waste
- Stronger linkage to state leading the way
- Add more detail about where the problem is
- Be sure to account for Eastern Washington/Western Washington and urban/rural variability
- Goals and action steps need to be prioritized and action steps need to be more closely linked to their goals
- Address processing and transportation infrastructure needs, such as zoning, permitting, and adequate transfer/consolidation sites

Other Discussion

The group discussed the current market demand for recycled composts. Some participants thought that current demand was greater than supply, while others were concerned that weak demand would not support an economically feasible market. The group generally agreed that more analysis was needed to determine marketability of recycled composts.

The group also focused on illegal dumping and hauling. While some were concerned that disposal bans would increase illegal dumping, others pointed to programs such as the Seattle yard waste ban and pickup program as successful means to reduce organics in municipal waste streams without increasing illegal dumping.

The group brainstormed a list of potential partners in the Organics Initiative:

- Compost facility operators
- Agricultural community
- Cities and counties
- Restaurants and grocery stores
- Landscapers and contractors
- Waste haulers
- Food banks
- Health jurisdictions
- Research universities
- Existing markets, such as 3 Mile Farms
- Department of Transportation
- Water and air quality agencies

- Construction industry
- Successful current programs

Industrial Waste Initiative

The group began discussion of the Industrial Waste Initiative with several clarifying questions:

- Q: Is the Industrial Waste Initiative about source reduction, or use of commercial products?
- A: It is hard to separate hazardous materials use from hazardous wastes. Basically, this initiative encompasses them both.
- Q: There are many action steps in the first 10 years. Added to the other initiatives, this is a huge amount of new process. How will municipalities, especially small ones, be able to afford all of this?
- A: Each initiative involves different players. This initiative will focus on a limited number of industrial sectors.
- Q: What impact will this have on businesses in the state? Will this prevent business from coming? Could it drive existing businesses to less restrictive states?
- A: Many businesses have become more efficient, and therefore more profitable, by reducing waste. Ecology hopes that this will be the case with more businesses in the future. An important aspect of the Beyond Waste vision is that Washington will enjoy long-term economic vitality. This initiative is currently aiming at strong partnerships with industry, including incentives for reducing wastes and toxins.
- Q: In the context of this initiative, what are “sustainable businesses”?
- A: Sustainable businesses are defined as businesses that are adopting more sustainable practices including economic, social, and environmental aspects.

Participants voiced the following positive aspects of the Initiative:

- It focuses on businesses taking care of reducing toxics
- It can benefit businesses by reducing costs through use of fewer toxics
- The long-term nature of the plan

Participants voiced the following concerns:

- There is no mention of the technical nutrient cycle

- There may be substantial costs for businesses and municipalities
- Suggested increases in regulation and taxes might drive business away
- Initiative needs a central thesis and more specificity
- Action steps do not always clearly follow the goals
- Some of the short and long-term goals appear incongruous
- Concern over the emphasis on “sustainability”: this is a waste plan, not a sustainability plan. Are we trying to turn current businesses into sustainability businesses?
- May adversely affect locals due to workload associated with small quantity generators, especially in smaller communities

Participants made the following suggestions to strengthen the initiative:

- Free-market incentives such as self-disclosure need to be included to facilitate industry changes
- Discuss up front in the plan how it relates to the Governor’s Sustainable Washington Plan, then bring it down to the solid waste plan level
- Include producer responsibility as a tool to finance the management of toxic products at end-of-life and to design products that are less toxic
- Use goals for state purchasing that can help eliminate use of toxic chemicals
- Assure that this is not a “one size fits all” program: smaller municipalities have different abilities than larger ones do
- Include tax shifting as suggested in Governor's Sustainable Washington Advisory Panel report
- Develop clearer, more quantitative goals
- Action steps should include labeling requirements of toxic and hazardous materials

Other Discussion

The group discussed the status of the technical waste stream. Several participants were concerned that the technical waste stream has not been addressed directly in any of the initiatives. Others were concerned that not enough was being done to capture materials for recycling in the current system. Ecology staff members explained that, while the technical waste stream is important, there are limitations to how much can be immediately addressed in the Beyond Waste Plan. Some things will not be directly addressed in the plan due to these constraints. Because programs such as electronics recycling have gained significant momentum, and will presumably continue to grow, the other five initiative areas were selected for special emphasis in the Beyond Waste Project. In addition, the electronics sector is targeted for a possible sector campaign in the industrial waste initiative. The facilitator suggested that the

group set time aside at the next meeting to revisit this concern, perhaps in the context of discussing the initiatives as a whole.

Moderate Risk Waste Initiative

Cheryl Smith presented a PowerPoint presentation (Attachment #1) on the fourth initiative: Moderate Risk Waste. This initiative was developed by a group of representatives from local governments and Ecology staff members. Cheryl handed out text copies of the Initiative for group members to review before the next meeting.

Some participants' initial comments were that the Initiative was going to be difficult to institute on a household level. In order for it to work, alternatives to hazardous products must be inexpensive and readily available.

Performance Indicators and Data Management Initiative

Chris Chapman presented a PowerPoint presentation (Attachment #2) on the fifth and final initiative: Performance Indicators and Data Management. She explained that, currently, only a small percentage of the waste stream is tracked. The purpose of the Performance Indicator and Data Management initiative is to capture a larger portion of the data and to develop indicators that will help evaluate the success of the Beyond Waste Plan.

One participant was concerned that the bulk of the materials entering the waste stream were from sources outside of Washington. For example, bauxite mining in third world countries to produce aluminum cans generates a large amount of waste. Another participant was concerned at the logistics of tracking waste that leaves the state.

The group highlighted the need to prioritize goals from other initiatives before prioritizing performance indicators. One participant suggested using benchmarks from other states' programs would be helpful for decision-makers. In response to a question of breadth, Ecology explained that the Performance Indicators Initiative would track waste reduction as well as economic and social vitality.

At this point, the participants also noted that these initiatives, taken together, constituted an ambitious program. The facilitator suggested that, at the next meeting, the group review the initiatives as a whole within the context of the overall Plan.

Meeting Evaluation

- Room was good
- Opportunity to discuss comments by group members was appreciated

- Starting and ending on time was appreciated

Next Steps

- Agendas for third and fourth meetings will be sent out before the next meeting
- The third meeting will involve discussion of the fourth and fifth initiatives as well as a review of the initiatives as a whole
- Several participants have or plan to give information to their stakeholder groups about these meetings
- The next meeting will be held on June 17 at 9:00 a.m. at the Columbia Tower Club.